

VZCZCXRO8617
OO RUEHJS
DE RUEHJA #1832 3081226
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 041226Z NOV 09
FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3721
INFO RUEHJS/AMCONSUL SURABAYA 2560

UNCLAS JAKARTA 001832

SIPDIS
SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR EAP/MTS
DEPT PASS TO PEACE CORPS

E.O. 12598: N/A
TAGS: [EAID](#) [USAID](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ID](#)
SUBJECT: Ambassador Hume Expresses Concerns on Status of Peace Corps Agreement

¶1. (U) This telegram contains an action request, please see para. ¶6.

¶2. (SBU) Summary: Ambassador Hume met with Bunyan Saptomo, Director of North and Central American Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on November 4 to discuss the remaining issues on completing Peace Corps' Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Indonesia. Ambassador Hume expressed concern that Indonesia's unwillingness to offer unconditional Administrative and Technical (A&T) status to Peace Corps staff not only endangered establishment of a Peace Corps program, but also risked endangering bilateral cooperation more broadly. End Summary.

¶3. (SBU) Ambassador Hume conveyed to Bunyan that Indonesia's unwillingness to offer unconditional A&T status to Peace Corps staff imperiled establishment of a Peace Corps program. Bunyan responded that since Peace Corps is not physically attached to the Embassy it does not qualify for A&T status, but that collocation with the Embassy would qualify it for limited A&T status, absent immunities. Ambassador Hume explained that Peace Corps receives A&T status in every country in which it operates and never collocates with Embassies or Consulates. He also reminded Bunyan that there are numerous other U.S. agencies that have offices apart from the Embassy but nonetheless receive A&T status from Indonesia. The Ambassador warned Bunyan that broad application of this new standard would strain relations between the U.S. and Indonesia and added that newly-appointed Foreign Minister Marty Natalegawa would likely bear most of the responsibility.

¶4. (SBU) Bunyan responded that the U.S. denied A&T status for their commercial and trade offices in Los Angeles and Chicago. He suggested that if the U.S. were to offer reciprocal A&T status to these offices, the GOI might reconsider its position on Peace Corps' request. Ambassador Hume told Bunyan that the State Department has no record of the GOI ever requesting for these offices to be accorded any diplomatic status. Bunyan then sought to distance the GOI's position on Peace Corps from a similar dispute over NAMRU, citing the political and public sensitivities specific to cooperation in health issues.

¶5. (SBU) Ambassador Hume reiterated Peace Corps position that it would be best to not include any definition of "family member" in the text of a Peace Corps' MOU. While the GOI prefers to include a restrictive definition (excluding same-sex partners), Ambassador Hume explained that the Peace Corps MOU is not the appropriate venue for that discussion and policies applied to Peace Corps by the GOI should ultimately be consistent with those applied to all USG agencies in Indonesia. Bunyan's response was non-specific, but indicated the GOI might reconsider its position.

¶5. (SBU) Peace Corps' return to Indonesia is long overdue. However, the longer it takes to finalize these remaining issues, the more likely new issues could crop up. Post's argument to receive A&T status for Peace Corps would be stronger if the U.S. offered reciprocal status to equivalent Indonesian entities. We encourage the Department to review the standards and policies we apply for

determining diplomatic status alongside the requests we are making of our foreign partners. We recommend moving quickly to ensure completion of the agreement in time for a joint announcement by President Obama and President Yudhoyono at the APEC summit in Singapore later this month. A Peace Corps announcement would deepen the impact of President Obama's upcoming bilateral with President Yudhoyono and lay the groundwork for a successful visit by President Obama in 2010. Ambassador Hume will meet with Foreign Minister Natalegawa on November 5. This meeting is the last opportunity to influence these issues at the ministerial level before the presidential bilateral at APEC. Post requests guidance on the diplomatic status of Indonesia's commercial offices in Chicago and Los Angeles in advance of that meeting. Post also requests guidance on whether Peace Corps accepts the GOI's offer of including a housing reimbursement provision in the implementing agreement (not the MOU) to offset visa fees.

HUME